

10/591,105

1-31 (CANCELED)

32. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An apparatus (1) for automatically dispensing products (2) that are at least one of voluminous, heavy and sold in packs, the apparatus comprising of at least one box (10) comprising at least one storage unit (30) for the products (2) comprising platforms superimposed in tiers and a means (40) for advancing at least one of the product (2) to at least one transfer zone (50), a transfer means (51) provided in the transfer zone (50) for receiving on a contacting plane the product (2) pushed by ~~[[the]]~~ an advancement means (40) and transporting the product (2) from the storage unit (30) to at least one outlet orifice (60), a pushing means (70) for evacuating the product (2) outside the box (10) through the outlet orifice (60), a blocking means (61) for blocking the outlet orifice (60) so as, when in a closed position, to prevent access to an interior of the storage unit (30), and, when in an open position, to allow the product (2) to exit, an anti-tampering means (56, 73) for preventing access to the interior of the storage unit (30) when the blocking means (61) is in the open position, and a means for monitoring the unit;

the tiers in the storage unit (30) comprise fixed platforms (31) each capable of receiving at least one row of the products (2); and

a movable platform (53) comprise a fixed base (53a) and a movable plate (53b), with a recall device (53c) disposed between the movable platform (53) and the movable plate (53b), and inclined ramps (58) integral with the box (10) and located on the trajectory of the transfer means (51) opposite the fixed platforms (31) in the storage unit (30) cooperate with the movable plate (53b) by moving the movable plate (53b) closer to the storage unit (30) to facilitate removal of the product (2).

33. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 32, wherein the blocking means comprises at least one trap door (61) connected to an actuation means (65), controlled by the pushing means (70), so as to open the trap door (61) in order to allow the product (2) to exit and close the trap door (61) once the product has exited.

34. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 32, wherein the dispensing apparatus comprises at least one of a payment means (21) and a selection means (22) for at least one of the products (2) contained within the dispensing apparatus (1).

3/19/09 2:29 pm

- 2 -

10/591,105

35. (CANCELED)

36. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim ~~[[35]]~~ 32, wherein each fixed platform (31) holds several rows of products (2) arranged side by side and separated by guide means (32). ✓

37. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim ~~[[35]]~~ 32, wherein the advancement means (40) pushes at least one row of products (2). ✓

38. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 37, wherein each row of product (2) comprises an advancement means (40).

39. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 37, wherein the advancement means are common to several rows of products (2).

40. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 37, wherein the advancement means (40) comprises at least one motor (41, 41') connected via at least one transmission (42, 43, 42' 43') to a pushing means (44) for pushing a corresponding row of the products (2).

41. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim ~~[[35]]~~ 32, wherein each fixed platform (31) comprises a surface for rolling. ✓

42. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim ~~[[35]]~~ 32, wherein each fixed platform (31) is slightly inclined toward a rear end the transfer zone (50). ✓

43. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 32, wherein the transfer means (51) comprises at least one motor (52) connected to ~~[[a]]~~ the movable platform (53) via at least one transmission (54, 55, 54' 55') in order to displace the movable platform (53) to the inside of the transfer zone (50) in front of the fixed platforms (31) of the storage unit (30) along guides integral with the box (10). ✓

44. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 40, wherein the transmission is selected from the group comprising at least a rack and pinion, an endless screw and bolt, a chain and pinion and a belt and pulley system.

45. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 43, wherein the movable platform (53) defines a plane inclined toward a front facilitating separation of the product (2) pushed by the advancement means (40) from a row of remaining products.

46. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 43, wherein the movable platform (53) comprising a surface for rolling.

2/19/09 4:30 pm

- 3 -

10/591,105

47. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim [[35]] 32, wherein the fixed platforms (31) in the storage unit (30) comprise, in front, a downwardly inclined ramp (34) for pushing the product (2) held by the movable platform (53) onto the platform when it is displaced downward. ✓

48. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 47, wherein the inclined ramps (34) decrease in length from an upper platform towards a lower platform.

49. (CANCELED)

50. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The dispensing apparatus according to claim 49, wherein~~ An apparatus (1) for automatically dispensing products (2) that are at least one of voluminous, heavy and sold in packs, the apparatus comprising of at least one box (10) comprising at least one storage unit (30) for the products (2) comprising platforms superimposed in tiers and a means (40) for advancing at least one of the product (2) to at least one transfer zone (50), a transfer means (51) provided in the transfer zone (50) for receiving on a contacting plane the product (2) pushed by an advancement means (40) and transporting the product (2) from the storage unit (30) to at least one outlet orifice (60), a pushing means (70) for evacuating the product (2) outside the box (10) through the outlet orifice (60), a blocking means (61) for blocking the outlet orifice (60) so as, when in a closed position, to prevent access to an interior of the storage unit (30), and, when in an open position, to allow the product (2) to exit, an anti-tampering means (56, 73) for preventing access to the interior of the storage unit (30) when the blocking means (61) is in the open position, and a means for monitoring the unit; ✓

the tiers in the storage unit (30) comprise fixed platforms (31) each capable of receiving at least one row of the products (2); ✓

the movable platform (53) comprise a fixed base (53a) and a movable plate (53b), with a recall device (53c) disposed between the movable platform (53) and the movable plate (53b), and inclined ramps (58) integral with the box (10) and located on the trajectory of the transfer means (51) opposite the fixed platforms (31) in the storage unit (30) cooperate with the movable plate (53b) by moving the movable plate (53b) closer to the storage unit (30) to facilitate removal of the product (2); and ✓

the inclined ramps (58) decrease in depth from a top to a bottom of the transfer zone (50). ✓

10/591,105

51. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 43, wherein the transfer means (51) comprises a plate (56) located in an upper portion of the movable platform (53), at a sufficient distance to allow the product (2) to be loaded between the plate and the movable platform (53) and at least partially constituting the anti-tampering means.

52. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 32, wherein the outlet orifice (60) is located in a lower portion of the box (10) and the outlet orifice (60) comprises a sliding platform (62) outside the box (10) equipped with at least one ramp inclined towards a floor.

53. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 33, wherein the trap door (61) covers at least the surface of the outlet orifice (60) and the actuation means (65) comprises at least one actuator (66) connected to the trap door (61) for displacing the trap door (61) parallel to itself between the open and closed positions.

54. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 33, wherein the pushing means (70) comprises at least one actuator (71) connected to a pushing device (73) defining at least one contact surface for contacting the product (2) to be discharged.

55. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 45, wherein an axis of the actuator (71) is generally parallel to the plane of the transfer means (51) and the contact surface of the pushing device (73) is flat and extends generally perpendicular to the plane.

56. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 54, wherein the pushing device (73) blocks the outlet orifice (60), when the trap door (61) is in the open position, and constitutes at least part of the anti-tampering means.

57. (CANCELED)

58. (CANCELED)

59. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 32, wherein the dispensing apparatus comprises a recycling container (80) adjacent to the box (10) equipped with at least one inlet orifice (81) for receiving empty packaging from the products (2).

3/19/09 - 3:30 pm

- 5 -

10/591,105

60. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 59, wherein the inlet orifice (81) comprises a trap door access (82) that moves between a closed position and an open position.

61. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 60, wherein the trap door access (82) is connected to an actuator (83) controlled by the regulating means.

62. (PREVIOUSLY AMENDED) The dispensing apparatus according to claim 59, wherein the recycling container (80) comprises means for compacting the empty packaging

63. (NEW) An apparatus (1) for automatically dispensing products (2) that are at least one of voluminous, heavy and sold in packs, the apparatus comprising of at least one box (10) comprising at least one storage unit (30) for the products (2) comprising platforms superimposed in tiers and a mechanism (40) for advancing at least one of the product (2) to at least one transfer zone (50), a transfer mechanism (51) provided in the transfer zone (50) for receiving on a contacting plane the product (2) pushed by an advancement mechanism (40) and transporting the product (2) from the storage unit (30) to at least one outlet orifice (60), a pushing mechanism (70) for evacuating the product (2) outside the box (10) through the outlet orifice (60), a blocking mechanism (61) for blocking the outlet orifice (60) so as, when in a closed position, to prevent access to an interior of the storage unit (30), and, when in an open position, to allow the product (2) to exit, an anti-tampering mechanism (56, 73) for preventing access to the interior of the storage unit (30) when the blocking mechanism (61) is in the open position, and a mechanism for monitoring the unit;

the tiers in the storage unit (30) comprise fixed platforms (31) each capable of receiving at least one row of the products (2); and

a movable platform (53) comprise a fixed base (53a) and a movable plate (53b), with a recall device (53c) disposed between the movable platform (53) and the movable plate (53b), and inclined ramps (58) integral with the box (10) and located on the trajectory of the transfer mechanism (51) opposite the fixed platforms (31) in the storage unit (30) cooperate with the movable plate (53b) by moving the movable plate (53b) closer to the storage unit (30) to facilitate removal of the product (2).

3/19/09 3:00 PM

- 6 -